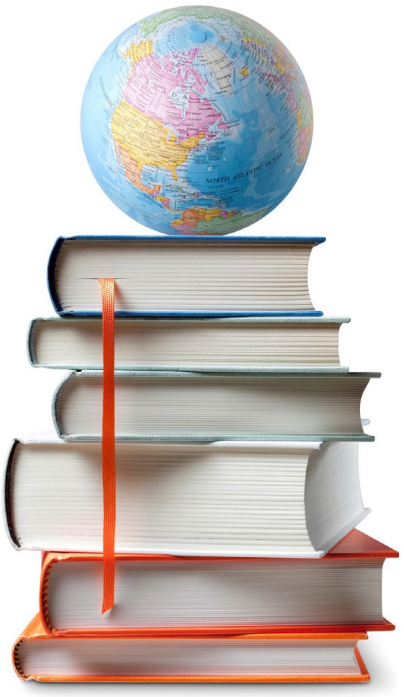
Cambridge Assessment International Education

Interactive

Learner Guide

Cambridge International AS & A Level English Language 9093

For examination from 2021



Version 2

Cambridge Pathway

In order to help us develop the highest quality resources, we are undertaking a continuous programme of review; not only to measure the success of our resources but also to highlight areas for improvement and to identify new development needs.

We invite you to complete our survey by visiting the website below. Your comments on the quality and relevance of our resources are very important to us.

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Section 1: About this guide

This guide explains what you need to know about your Cambridge International AS & A Level **English Language** course and examinations.

It will help you to:

- understand what skills you should develop by taking this AS & A Level course
- understand how you will be assessed
- understand what we are looking for in the answers you write
- plan your revision programme
- revise, by providing revision tips and an interactive revision checklist (Section 7).

Following a Cambridge International AS & A level programme will help you to develop abilities that universities value highly, including a deep understanding of your subject; higher order thinking skills (analysis, critical thinking, problem solving); presenting ordered and coherent arguments; and independent learning and research.

Studying Cambridge International AS & A Level **English Language** will help you to develop a set of transferable skills, including the ability to work with linguistic information; think logically and independently; consider accuracy; understand situations from a linguistic point of view; analyse language and reflect on findings.

Section 2: Syllabus content - what you need to know

This section gives you an outline of the syllabus content for this course. There are four components, which can be combined in specific ways (see Section 3). Talk to your teacher to make sure you know which components you will be taking.

Content section	Assessment	Topics included
Reading	Paper 1 AS and A Level	You will develop your knowledge and understanding of a wide range of written texts such as: • advertisements • brochures • leaflets • editorials • news stories • articles • reviews • blogs • investigative journalism • letters • podcasts • (auto)biographies • travel writing • diaries • essays • scripted speech • narrative writing • descriptive writing.
Writing	Paper 1 AS and A Level	The knowledge and understanding that you will need to show in Paper 2 is the same as is covered in Paper 1 but you will apply your skills and techniques in a number of ways, including: • writing for a specific audience and purpose. • structuring your writing • using a range of appropriate linguistic and literary features • expressing ideas accurately and clearly • reflecting upon and evaluating the qualities of your own writing, including aspects relating to its purpose, form and audience

Content section	Assessment	Topics included
Language Analysis Section A: Language change Section B: Child language acquisition	Paper 3 A Level only	When studying **Language change** you will explore: • how English has developed from Early Modern to Contemporary English • graphology, spelling, phonology, morphology, syntax, lexis, grammar and the ways meaning might change when language in use • n-gram graphs, concordance and word tables You will develop your use of terminology related to language change, and explore relevant theories and theorists. When studying Child language acquisition you will explore: • the stages of early development of language in children aged 0-8 years. • the various features and functions of children's spoken language • relevant theories and theorists of child language. • how children's language develops • how to interpret and analyse spoken language transcriptions • how to analyse conversation involving children • how to plot your findings alongside relevant theories
Language Topics Section A: English in the world Section B: Language and the self	Paper 4 A Level only	When studying **English in the world** you will explore: • the history of English as a 'global' language • the development of standard and nonstandard forms of English i • ethical considerations related to the continuing expansion of English usage around the world. • colonialism, cultural influence and effects • multilingualism • the future of English • varieties of English • standard and nonstandard 'Englishes' • official and unofficial attitudes and policies • relevant ethical considerations • language shift and death • cultural imperialism, equality of opportunity, and global cooperation You will develop skills and techniques in reading and demonstrating critical understanding of unseen texts. When studying **Language and the self** you will explore: • how we use language to communicate our sense of self to others • how language might be innate, learned, or both • the ways in which language and thought are both connected and separate from each other • how we use language, both consciously and unconsciously, to construct and maintain our identity. • behaviourism, innatism, nativism and empiricism • linguistic relativity and determinism, universalism, language of thought hypothesis • the relationship between language and social identity • speech communities and prestige • idiolect, dialect, sociolect, genderlect

Content section	Assessment	Topics included
		• standard and nonstandard features • inclusion and exclusion • speech sounds and accents You will develop skills and techniques in reading and demonstrating critical understanding of unseen texts relating to 'Language and the self', selecting and analysing pertinent ideas and examples from the texts and relating these ideas and examples to theories, theorists and studies from your wider study of the topic.

Make sure you always check the latest syllabus, which is available from our public website public website. This will also explain the different combinations of components you can take.

Prior knowledge

We recommend that you have completed either the Cambridge IGCSETM First Language English 0500 or Cambridge International O Level 4024/4029.

Key concepts

Key concepts are essential ideas that help you to develop a deep understanding of your subject and make links between different aspects of the course.

The key concepts for Cambridge International AS & A Level English Language are:

- Text and context

It is important to understand that 'a text' can range from a short conversation, to a book published across several volumes. Furthermore, all texts have a context, which can refer to the time period or situation where something happens, was written or spoken. This can help to explain it and may help your understanding of the language. As an English language learner you should always consider the meaning of a text due to the circumstances of where and when it was produced, how it's communicated and how it's received.

- Meaning and style

As an English language learner, you should consider how form, structure and language help to create a distinctive writing style. While studying your A Level in English Language you will develop a range of skills and techniques to identify and analyse how linguistic features in your own and other's writing and spoken language create different effects and meanings.

- Audience

As an English language learner, you will need to identify and analyse the ways that writers and speakers use and adapt language to communicate with their intended audience(s). Likewise, you must be able to predict, recognise and analyse the different responses the audience(s) may give depending on context, gender, age, race, class etc.

- Creativity

Throughout your English language learning you will need to think creatively and show your creativity in a range of forms and contexts such as writing for a specific purpose and audience or analysing a challenging text.

- Diversity

You will learn that language is constantly subject to a range of influences – whether personal, social, geographical or otherwise – and that the English language exists in a range of forms at any given moment. Understanding how diverse language can be will offer you many opportunities for analysis, comparison and exploration.

- Change

As a learner of English language you will learn how the sounds, shapes, meaning and style of letters, words and syntax can change over time. You will learn how to analyse these changes and explore the reasons why these changes may have taken place.

Section 3: How you will be assessed

Cambridge International AS English Language makes up the first half of the Cambridge International A Level course in English Language and provides a foundation for the study of English Language at Cambridge International A Level.

About the examinations

For AS Level you will take Paper 1 and Paper 2 only

For the full A Level you will take Papers 1, 2, 3 and 4.

These are summarised in the table below. Find out from your teacher which papers you will be taking.

About the papers

The table gives you further information about the examination papers:

Component	Time and marks	Questions	Percentage of qualification
Paper 1: **Reading**	2 hours 15 minutes 50 marks	You will need to answer two compulsory questions: • Question 1 in Section A • Question 2 in Section B.	50% of the AS Level 25% of the A Level
Paper 2: **Writing**	2 hours 50 marks	You will need to answer two questions: • Question 1 in Section A is compulsory • One question from a choice of three in Section B.	50% of the AS Level 25% of the A Level
Paper 3: **Language Analysis**	2 hours 15 minutes 50 marks	You will need to answer two compulsory questions: • Question 1 in Section A • Question 2 in Section B.	25% of the A Level
Paper 4: **Language Topics**	2 hours 15 minutes 50 marks	You will need to answer two compulsory questions: • Question 1 in Section A • Question 2 in Section B.	25% of the A Level

Section 4: What skills will be assessed?

The areas of knowledge, understanding and skills that you will be assessed on are called **assessment objectives** (AOs).

Assessment objectives (AO)	What does the AO mean?
AO1: Read and demonstrate understanding of a wide variety of texts.	You will need to show the examiner that you have developed your reading skills and techniques using the texts provided in the exam paper. The examiner will be looking at your knowledge and understanding of linguistic and literary features, as well as your ideas about the ways audience, purpose, style and context influence the meaning of texts.
AO2: Write effectively, creatively, accurately and appropriately, for a range of audiences and purposes.	For AO2, the examiner will be looking at your skills and techniques in writing, including how your writing is appropriate for the audience, purpose and form specified in the question on the exam paper. You will need to write in a structured way, expressing your ideas accurately and clearly, using linguistic and literary features, such as imagery, rhetorical devices or evaluative terms.
AO3: Analyse the ways in which writers' and speakers' choices of form, structure and language produce meaning and style.	Here, you need to be able to analyse and compare the texts presented in the exam paper. The examiner will be looking at how you choose features from the text to use as evidence for your ideas on form, structure and language, comparisons you may make, and the way in which you bring your ideas together.
AO4: Demonstrate understanding of linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches.	For AO4, you will need to apply theories to support your ideas about language, using the knowledge and understanding from the Syllabus and from your wider study. The examiner will be looking at how you refer to theories and theorists to support your ideas and how you show the depth of your knowledge and understanding.
AO5: Analyse and synthesise language data from a variety of sources.	You will need to show that you have developed techniques in understanding of texts, graphs and tables which offer information on language. The examiner will be looking at how you use the data presented in the question as evidence for your ideas and how you bring your ideas together to form effective analysis.

It is important that you know the different weightings (%) of the assessment objectives, as this affects how the examiner will assess your work.

The approximate weightings given to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are given below:

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting at AS Level %	Weighting at A Level %
AO1	15	20
AO2	45	30
AO3	40	20
AO4	–	20
AO5	–	10
Total	100	100

Assessment objectives as a perventage of each component

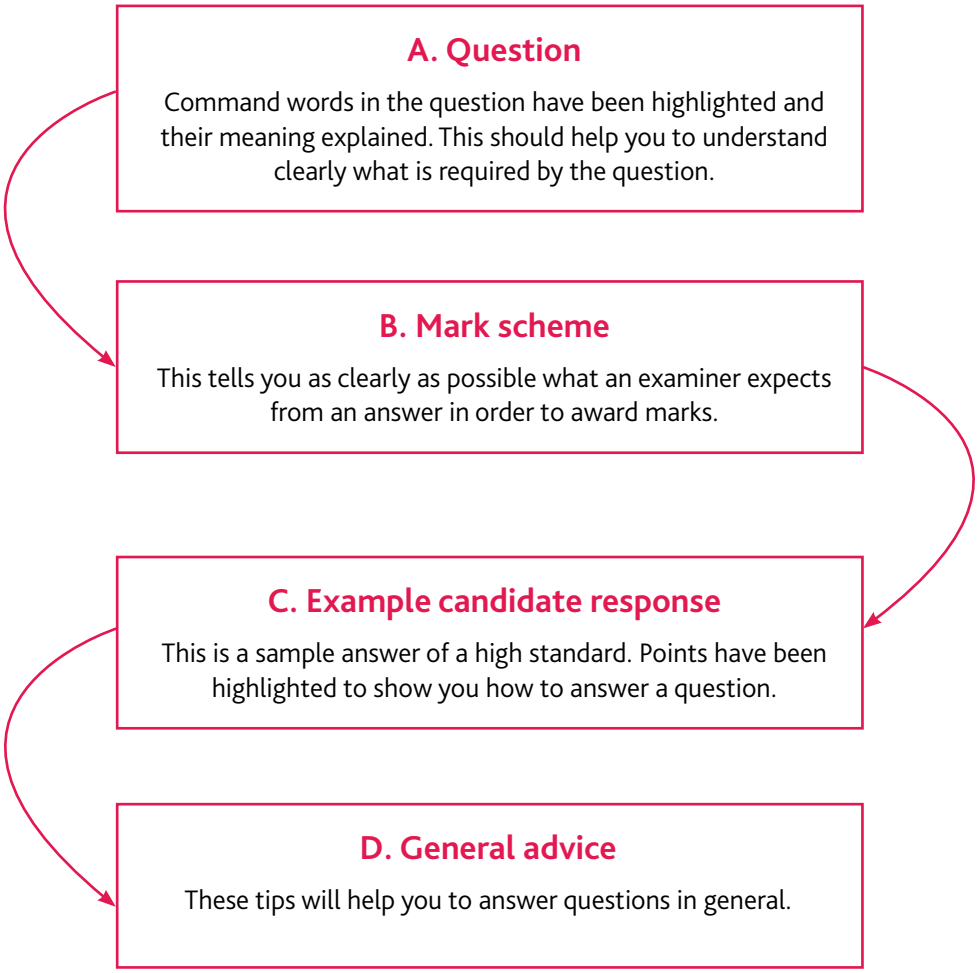
Assessment objective	Weighting in components %			
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Paper 4
AO1	30	–	10	40
AO2	10	80	10	20
AO3	60	20	–	–
AO4	–	–	40	40
AO5	–	–	40	–
Total	100	100	100	100

Section 5: Example candidate response

This section takes you through an example question and candidate response. It will help you to see how to identify the command words within questions and to understand what is required in your response. Understanding the questions will help you to know what you need to do with your knowledge. For example, you might need to read something, write something, analyse something, compare something or discuss something.

All information and advice in this section is specific to the example question and response being demonstrated. It should give you an idea of how your responses might be viewed by an examiner but it is not a list of what to do in all questions. In your own examination, you will need to pay careful attention to what each question is asking you to do.

This section is separated as follows:


A. Question
Command words in the question have been highlighted and their meaning explained. This should help you to understand clearly what is required by the question.
B. Mark scheme
This tells you as clearly as possible what an examiner expects from an answer in order to award marks.
C. Example candidate response
This is a sample answer of a high standard. Points have been highlighted to show you how to answer a question.
D. General advice
These tips will help you to answer questions in general.

A. Question

Command words

Question 1 is set into two parts; you'll need to be able to write in a very different way for each of these two separate tasks.

The command words in Question 1(a) are 'Write the text for the leaflet'.

In Question 1(a) you are given the expected word count – no more than 400 words – so the examiner will expect your response to be approximately that length, and you should divide your exam time accordingly.

Question 1

Your headteacher has asked you to produce a leaflet called *Leaving Home*. The leaflet will be aimed at older teenagers who are going to live in another town or city to go to university.

(a) Write the text for the leaflet, using no more than 400 words. In your writing, give advice and guidance on how to manage living away from your family for the first time. [15]

In this part of the question, you are only asked to write the text – you don't need to add drawings, or spaces which would be filled with images, even though such items might appear in a printed leaflet. The examiner will only look at your writing, and how you've crafted it to fit the task.

It would be very useful, however, to think about the overall layout of your text. For example, you should consider how the use of headings, subheadings and paragraphing would improve the form of the leaflet. Bear in mind that these features may also streamline your focus when writing.

The command words in Question 1(b) are also in two parts: firstly:

The command words in Question 1(b) are also in two parts: firstly: 'Write a reflective commentary on your text'

and then 'explaining how your linguistic choices contribute to fulfilling the task'.

(b) Write a reflective commentary on your text, explaining how your linguistic choices contribute to fulfilling the task set by your headteacher. [10]

Let's look at what the examiner will expect from your reflective commentary. This can be written using the first person: after all, it is your writing you are reflecting on. Your commentary should contain a logical sequence of ideas and you should use a good standard of written English.

Firstly, you should decide which features of your writing you are going to reflect on, for example: style, lexis, grammar, register, semantics or pragmatics. You then need to explain why you made these writing choices and how you feel they are appropriate to what you've been asked to do in the question. You do not need to mention all of the linguistic frameworks listed in the example above, instead it is better to select the features or frameworks carefully and be prepared to write fully on just a few of them.

The reflective commentary is an opportunity for you to evaluate your choices: think about how well you have achieved the focus of the question in the language features you have used.

B. Mark scheme

Assessment Objectives and Mark Scheme Criteria	Explanation
AO2: Write effectively, creatively, accurately and appropriately for a range of audiences and purposes	Your writing in Question 1(a) will be marked using AO2. You need to be able to: • write creatively in the form, and for the purpose, specified in the question. • engage your audience with the language choices you make. • structure and develop your ideas logically • maintain your engagement with your audience, making sure all of your answer is relevant to the task. • write accurately using a wide range of language features.
AO3: Analyse the ways in which writers' and speakers' choices of form, structure and language produce meaning and style	Your writing in Question 1(b) will be marked using AO3. You need to be able to: • explain and evaluate your writing, commenting on the form, structure, language you have used and how these give meaning to your writing. • explain and evaluate your style, commenting on the ways you have related to your audience.

C.Example candidate response

Question 1(a)

(1) So, congrats! You've aced your A levels, and now it's the time you've been waiting for. Time to wave bye bye to your bro, sis, Ma, Pa and pet goldfish and head off for Universityville, Freedom County, zip code IND3P3ND3NC3. Yay! But before you pack your lifetime collection of odd socks and a year's supply of chocolate, hang on a minute and have a look at some valuable advice from me, your friendly expert Uni Preparation Guide.

(2) **Tempted to squander? Try not to blunder!**

Too posh to look after your dosh? Or in too much of a daze to save? At Uni, you'll be in charge of your own money for the first time in your life. It may feel pretty amazing to have all that filthy lucre to manage. Keep a track of everything you spend so you don't run out of cash when you're going to need it most. Always make sure you've allowed enough for rent, food, books and travel before you're even tempted to treat yourself to that extra-special customised Porsche.

JK! For that you'll have to wait until you've graduated...

(3) **Eating like Einstein**

We all know that students need brainpower, brains need food and food equals fuel, but what kind of fuel are you going to feed that thinking machine inside your head? Burgers? Fries? Ice cream? Cake? Uh-oh! Take-aways are super-high in empty calories and astronomical in cost. Instead, take time to select fresh fruit and veg to cook yourself; choose pasta for slow-release carbs. Eating healthily, you'll feel good, learn more efficiently and you won't be allowing unhealthy choices to chow down on your budget!

(1) Right from the start, the candidate addresses the audience directly in a very informal style which is appropriate to the task. This is very engaging and uses lots of language devices such as abbreviation, neologisms (new made up words), Americanisation and text language. There is excitement implied by the exclamation mark and capitals, giving a lively feel to the writing.

(2) The writing carries on in its journalistic style, using internal rhyme, with direct questions to the audience. Notice the use of 'filthy lucre' though – the candidate is careful to use some low frequency lexis to maintain the idea of speaking to potential university students.

There is something else important to note in this paragraph: although the level of formality is low (using the popular abbreviation 'JK' for example), the candidate is aware that the task of 'advice' was originally given by the headteacher and shows awareness of this aspect of the question.

(3) Look at the different ways the response uses sentence structures. There is a wide variety of sentence types here. Note how the longer and more complex sentences contain the serious messages and how the short, or incomplete sentences are used to maintain the humorous aspect of the writing.

(4) Tickety tock

No doubt having made all those new friends, you'll be desperate to become the life and soul of the party, but late nights and disco fever can take their toll. Sure, use your planner to detail which nights you're meeting your mates, league match fixtures and hot dates with the girl who sits on the front bench of the lecture theatre, but plot in your lecture timetable, seminar dates and assignment deadlines first. If you manage your time carefully, you won't need to give your fave band's next gig a miss because you've an essay to hand in the next day – you'll have that essay proof-read and printed, smug as you like.

Good luck, peeps! And enjoy! (5)

Specimen answer 1b: Reflective commentary

(1) *I decided to write the text for my leaflet in the same chatty style as that used in popular magazines which are aimed at teenagers, giving a light-hearted and humorous feel to the text whilst offering serious messages. My reason for the humour was to attract and maintain the attention of the target audience of older teenagers; on the other hand I felt that the information and advice the leaflet was offering needed to be sensible and worthwhile, as the original instructions had come from the headteacher – therefore he also needed to approve of what I wrote.*

(2) *The structure of the leaflet is set into separate paragraphs, to make the overall graphology of the leaflet clear and easy to read. I used subheadings which have catchy titles including ellipsis and rhetorical question ('Tempted to squander?') coupled with a rhyming imperative ('Try not to squander!) and alliteration ('Eating like Einstein' and 'Tickety tock . . .' as I felt they needed to match the overall style of writing, rather than just state 'Healthy Eating', for example, at the top of the third paragraph which would seem too formal for the writing style I chose.*

(4) You will see how effective the overall organisation of the writing has been made with the use of headings and clear paragraphing. The candidate has checked spellings and there is a logical flow of ideas which bring the writing to the required word count.

(5) The candidate selected three topics for advice: finance, healthy eating and time-keeping. All of these are relevant and the response is crafted very well – make sure you look at all of the question though. Here, the response does not tackle the idea of moving to 'a new town or city'.

The response was awarded 14 out of 15 marks.

(1) The first paragraph comments on the overall style of the writing, using the first person to explain the ways in which the candidate has made choices to engage the audience but has also included advice which the headteacher would feel was valuable.

(2) Next, the candidate explains the reasons for the layout and the linguistic features of the headings used. You will see that a range of technical terminology is used accurately and fluently. There's an effective explanation here of how and why the level of formality was kept low on purpose.

(3) I used second person address throughout to create an intimate relationship between writer and audience. I wanted to enhance this by creating a very informal register, with flattery ('congrats') and colloquial terms such as 'JK', 'Yay!' and 'peeps' which were used to position the reader as an equal. The inclusion of 'zip code IND3P3ND3NC3' is set out to resemble text-speak, which also lowers the level of formality and is in capitals to imply shouting and excitement.

(4) My sentence structures include snappy fragments, 'So, congrats!' with the low register discourse marker opening the leaflet but more complex sentences containing the more serious messages, such as 'Keep a track of everything . . .' (paragraph 2) are positioned inside each paragraph. Hopefully this juxtaposition of structures acknowledges the fact that the leaflet is meant to appeal by being humorous whilst containing meaningful information.

Some of the features I used were intended to enhance the feeling of excitement about going to university. Therefore 'Too posh to look after your dosh? or in too much of a daze to save?' include rhyme on 'posh' and 'dosh' and assonance in 'daze' and 'save' inside rhetorical questions with ellipsis, to create an interesting rhythm. However, I also used hyperbole in 'super-high' and 'astronomical' to reinforce my warning about eating fast food in paragraph 3. By combining these features, I wanted to give an overall impression of everything that going to university might mean, which should be an exciting but maybe also a tricky time for young people leaving home for the first time.

(5) On reflection, I feel that I have achieved my aims in my writing. I wondered at first whether I had chosen too many colloquial features and not enough low frequency lexis or formal grammatical structures although when I considered that my main purpose was to get teenagers to read my leaflet, when I read through my writing I felt that I had a good balance of informality of style and formality of sensible advice.

(3) The way this section is written is very confident in the explanation of how and why the relationship between reader and writer is created.

(4) Here, the response loses some of its tone and is in danger of repeating itself. It's true that the original response was very rich in literary and linguistic features but it's better to select what you feel are the most successful than have a list of them running through the commentary. It's in this paragraph that the commentary starts to be rather 'chatty' – make sure you maintain your register and tone throughout your commentary.

(5) The reflection and evaluation are balanced; look how the candidate refers to what was 'considered' which implies that time was spent before the writing began, making sure that the response fitted the task properly.

Although the reflection and evaluation are balanced, these are used as a conclusion to the commentary. It would have been more effective to reflect within each paragraph of the commentary to make sure the writing flows and makes a cohesive whole.

The response for Question 1(b) was awarded 9 out of 10 marks.

This means that overall for Question 1, 23 out of 25 marks were awarded.

D. How the answer could have been improved

Both parts of the specimen answer are high-grade responses although there are ways in which improvements could have been made.

Although in part (a), the candidate has written the text in a very engaging manner, and has addressed most of the question content, there is no advice to the target audience of living in another town or city, nor does it directly address the age of the target audience, in this case older teenagers. If the candidate had used these two ideas alongside the ideas already incorporated in the response, the examiner would know that a complete exploration of all aspects of the question had been made.

The part (b) specimen response shows balanced explanations which address the question. This means that the candidate has made a careful selection from the writing in part (a) in order to explain why the linguistic choices were made and how they fulfil the task. Even so, the candidate's register could be a little more formal and less chatty. Although you will be describing your own writing and possibly using the first person to do so, the examiner will look for a good standard of written English which incorporates a wide range of technical terminology being used to describe language.

E. Common mistakes and misconceptions

Look carefully at the weighting of marks for each part of the question: fifteen marks are available for Question 1(a) and ten marks are available for Question 1(b). This doesn't mean that you should cut your commentary short, which is a mistake which is often made. You'll need to plan your exam time carefully though – often candidates will put all their writing energy into Question 1(a) and run out of steam for the second part of the question. It's a common misconception that your commentary is a supplementary or add-on item to the question – in fact it an important part of the overall requirement of the exam. You will be proving to the examiner that you can write in two distinct ways and for 25 marks overall.

Before you start your writing in the exam, you will probably want to make a plan which will help you focus. It's a common mistake to put so much time and detail into the plan that there's not enough exam time left to complete the writing task set. Look upon the plan as a tool to help you, rather than something elaborate for your finished writing to duplicate.

It's a common mistake to forget about paragraphing when ideas are in full creative flow! Make sure your writing is clearly set out, with well-defined paragraphs separating your ideas. This will give the logical organisation to your writing that the examiner is looking for and will help maintain your own focus.

Depending on the form of text asked for Question 1(a), candidates are often tempted to enhance the look of the specified form by putting in illustrations. It's a common misconception that these are useful: instead, concentrate on using a wide variety of linguistic choices relating to audience and meaning, improving your style and giving yourself a range of features you can reflect upon in your commentary.

When you're writing your commentary, be careful when you quote from your own writing. It's a common mistake to quote whole sentences (or even paragraphs!) to support ideas but it's better to use just one or two brief examples to justify your point.

Where it's appropriate to the form required in Question 1(a) you might write in an informal style and register. It would be a mistake, though, to continue like that in your reflective commentary. There you should use a wide range of technical terminology to describe and explain your choices.

It's a common misconception that a response to Question 1(b) should be merely a brief description of your writing in Question 1(b). Make sure you give reasons for your language choices and that you reflect on whether you have achieved your aims. If you think you could have improved your writing in some way, then explain how – and if you think you have been successful then say how and why!

General advice

Read all parts of the question very carefully before deciding on your approach. For Question 1(a) you could consider the following points to get you started:

- Who is your target audience?
- How are you going to impart meaning to your audience?
- What style of writing will you adopt?
- What register will you use?
- Will you use rhetorical devices?
- What about the overall layout (graphology) of your finished text?

For Question 1(b) you might think about:

- Do I need to change the register and style of my writing to achieve my reflective commentary?
- Which features of my writing do I feel are the most important ones to reflect upon?
- What should I select from my writing to support the points I intend to make?
- Which features of my writing have achieved my writing aims?
- Which features of my writing could be improved upon?

So you will know for the exam how long your writing will need to be to achieve the word count in Question 1(a), practise writing 400 words of your creative choice lots of times. By doing this you will be able to see the amount of text you will be expected to create.

Each time you perform this task, keep an eye on the time and try to think how you would alter your writing times to fit in with the exam timing.

Where you've created writing in class or for homework, write a reflective commentary each time. Ask yourself what linguistic choices you have made, give yourself a heading for each one and then write a paragraph on each. Headings are not required in the exam but for your practice, they will help you to focus clearly. In the exam you could use headings as a brief plan for your commentary.

Whenever you write, whether it is in class, for homework, or in the exam – read through your finished piece and check your spelling, punctuation and grammar. Of course, in class or at home you will be able to use a dictionary – make sure you learn those tricky spellings before the exam!

Make sure you can use a wide range of technical terminology fluently and accurately: get used to incorporating this in class and in your homework and use a glossary of terms in your revision.

Section 6: Revision

This advice will help you revise and prepare for the examinations. It is divided into general advice and specific advice for each of the papers.

Use the tick boxes ☐ to keep a record of what you have done, what you plan to do or what you understand.

General advice

Before the examination

- ☐ Find out when the examinations are and plan your revision so you have enough time for each topic. A revision timetable will help you.
- ☐ Find out how long each Paper is and how many questions you have to answer.
- ☐ Know the meaning of the command words used in questions and how to apply them to the information given. Highlight the command words in past papers and check what they mean. There is a list on p11 of this guide.
- ☐ Make revision notes; try different styles of notes. See the *Learner Guide: Planning, Reflection and Revision* (www.cambridgeinternational.org/images/371937-learner-guide-planning-reflection-and-revision.pdf) which has ideas about note-taking. Discover what works best for you.
- ☐ Work for short periods then have a break. Revise small sections of the syllabus at a time.
- ☐ Build your confidence by practising questions on each of the topics.
- ☐ Make sure you practise lots of past examination questions so that you are familiar with the format of the examination papers. You could time yourself when doing a paper so that you know how quickly you need to work in the real examination.
- ☐ Look at mark schemes to help you to understand how the marks are awarded for each question.
- ☐ Make sure you are familiar with the technical terminology that you need for this syllabus. Your teacher will be able to advise you on what is expected.
- ☐ Check which theories and theorists are appropriate for the relevant topic you are revising, and which ones you need to learn.

During the examination

- ☐ Read the instructions carefully and answer **all** the questions. In Paper 2, don't forget that in Section B, you will have a choice of three questions. Don't be tempted to answer all of these!
- ☐ Check the number of marks for each question or part question. This helps you to judge how long you should be spending on the response. You don't want to spend too long on some parts of the questions and then run out of time at the end.
- ☐ Do not leave out questions or parts of questions. Remember, no answer means no marks.
- ☐ You do not have to answer the questions in the order they are printed in the answer booklet. You may be able to do a later question more easily then come back to an earlier one for another try.
- ☐ Read each question very carefully. Misreading a question can cost you marks: Identify any command words – you could underline or highlight them. Identify the other key words and perhaps underline them too.
- ☐ Read all parts of a question before starting your answer. Think carefully about what is needed for each part. You will not need to repeat material.
- ☐ For n-gram graphs, look very carefully at the information you are given, read the title, key, axes, etc. to find out exactly what they show. For word tables, look at any headings for clues as to what the question is about.
- ☐ **Answer the question.** Use your skills and techniques to show your knowledge and understanding. Don't just try to write about everything you know. Only use the knowledge, understanding, skills and techniques you need to answer the question.

- ☐ Make sure that you have answered everything that a question asks. Sometimes one sentence asks two things, e.g. 'Write … and explain …'. It is easy to concentrate on the first request and forget about the second one.
- ☐ Always check your spelling. The examiner is looking for a good standard of accurately written English.
- ☐ Use the correct linguistic terminology in your answers when possible.
- ☐ Make sure all your writing is clear, and that your paragraphs form a logical sequence.
- ☐ If you need to change a word, it is better to cross out your work and rewrite it. Don't try to write over the top of your previous work as it will be difficult to read.
- ☐ Don't write your answers in columns, or add diagrams. The examiner is looking for your English language skills, not your artwork!

Advice for all Papers

- ☐ Don't write in note form – the examiner is looking for fluent, logically structured prose responses.
- ☐ Read through your responses before the exam is finished: have you checked your spellings? Do your paragraphs flow in an organised manner?
- ☐ Make sure your knowledge and understanding of technical terminology is tip-top, and that you can use it fluently and accurately.
- ☐ Read as much as you can, to absorb form, style, meaning, purpose and structure.
- ☐ Write as much as you can, to ensure that when the exam approaches you don't feel as though you don't know where to start.
- ☐ Get used to analysing everything you read, whether it is a 500-page novel or the back of a cereal packet!
- ☐ Get used to analysing everything you write – be honest with yourself but don't feel you should be harsh on yourself all the time, you should take confidence in your own ability to create good quality writing!
- ☐ Share your writing with your friends and family – tell them what your writing aims have been, and ask for their constructive criticism.

Advice for Paper 1

- ☐ Make sure you know the difference in the forms and styles of writing which may appear in advertisements, brochures, leaflets, editorials, news stories, articles, reviews, blogs, investigative journalism, letters, podcasts, (auto)biographies, travel writing, diaries, essays, scripted speech, narrative writing, and descriptive writing.
- ☐ Make sure you understand exactly what is required by the directed writing task in response to a text (10 marks).
- ☐ Make sure you can use language to compare the form, structure and language of your own response in part (a) with that of the original text (15 marks)
- ☐ Make sure you know how much of your own handwriting corresponds to the word count Question 1(a), which is 150-200 words. This is only a small word count, so don't waste valuable words, and don't make your response too brief!
- ☐ Practise writing whenever you can – look at lots of varieties of texts, then choose your vocabulary, style and structure to match or contrast with the form, purpose and audience of the text you are reading.

Advice for Paper 2

- ☐ Make sure you feel confident to create writing in the form and style of writing which may be required in advertisements, brochures, leaflets, editorials, news stories, articles, reviews, blogs, investigative journalism, letters, podcasts, (auto) biographies, travel writing, diaries, essays, scripted speech, narrative writing, and descriptive writing.
- ☐ Make sure you know how much of your own handwriting corresponds to the word count Question 1(a), which is approximately 400 words. This is only a short word count, so don't waste valuable words – on the other hand, don't make your response too brief! You need to be able to use your own writing to be able create an effective reflective commentary.
- ☐ Keep practising writing reflective commentaries on all of your classwork and homework. Make sure you use evaluative language, questioning yourself whether you have achieved your writing goals.

- [ ] Don't forget, in Question 1(b) the examiner will be looking at your focus on your choices of form, structure and language, and your analysis of how these stylistic choices relate to audience and shape meaning. Use the first person in your explanation and evaluation if you wish, but make sure you use technical terminology to describe your linguistic choices.
- [ ] Don't answer all of the questions in Section B – you need to make a choice of one out of three questions. Play to your strengths: if you are more confident in creating narrative writing, answer that question; if you prefer to write argumentatively, answer that question, and so on.

Advice for Paper 3

- [ ] For Section A, before the exam, look for and read closely as much historical prose that you can find, to make sure you are as familiar as possible with examples of English from the Early Modern period to Contemporary English.
- [ ] Make sure you know all the terminology you will need to describe, explain and evaluate the language presented by the changes in the English language.
- [ ] Look for n-gram graphs representing changes in language use over time – you can use the Google n-gram site and insert words of your choice, or words that interest you from something you are reading – that way you are creating your own n-grams! Read the n-grams very carefully so you can see what language changes the data is showing.
- [ ] Use the internet to find word tables from corpus data, looking for collocate lists and synonym lists. Think carefully: what are these data telling you? How do they compare with data you have found on any n-grams?
- [ ] For Section B, make sure you are confident in reading and interpreting transcriptions of spoken language. There are strict conventions in conversation transcriptions and they look very different from a script from a play, for example. By the time the exam approaches, you shouldn't need to refer to the transcription key; you should be an expert!
- [ ] Make sure you know which theories and theories are appropriate to child language acquisition: it would be unlikely, for example, that a gender theorist would be an appropriate reference to six year old children's spoken language.

Advice for Paper 4

- [ ] Paper 4 requires a different style of writing from that of Paper 3: you're now being asked to discuss two given topics which in turn are quite different from each other. Make sure you can adopt this 'discursive' style of writing by practising setting up arguments and counter-arguments around the two topics. You can do this in class or at home whenever the opportunity arises.
- [ ] For Section A, make sure you know about some of the varieties of English spoken around the world. These might be Hinglish, Singlish, Spanglish, one that you know from your own country, or many more that have arisen in the relatively recent past. They are also known as 'hybrids'.
- [ ] So that you are fully confident about the ethical considerations of English in the world, find articles from the Internet and newspapers which give reports on the topic. Such reports may contain information about cultural imperialism, equality of opportunity or global cooperation, for example. Some reports may contain bias: to practise your discursive style, set up your own arguments surrounding this bias.
- [ ] Make sure you have knowledge and understanding of the ways that English in the world has developed due, for example, to colonialism or technological developments over time.
- [ ] Be clear about which theories and theorists are relevant to the topic, making sure you can spell all names accurately. It's not enough just to mention names; the examiner will be looking for short explanations which support the points you are making – that way you will show that you are applying theories confidently.
- [ ] Make sure you have in-depth knowledge about language and social identity so that you can write fluently in Section B about speech communities, prestige, idiolect, dialect, sociolect, genderlect, variation, standard and nonstandard features, inclusion and exclusion, speech sounds and accents – these are the features of our speech that make up our identity. Some of these we use on purpose (because we have learnt to do so), some of them come naturally to us (innately). Try to identify these features in yourself and others around you.

Revision checklists

The tables below can be used as a revision checklist: **It doesn't contain all the detailed knowledge you need to know, just an overview.** For more detail see the syllabus and talk to your teacher.

The table headings are explained below:

Skills and Knowledge	Ways to practise skills	R	A	G	Comments
Here is a list of the skills you need to cover and work on.	Here are some suggestions of how to practise your skills.	You can use the tick boxes to show when you have revised an item and how confident you feel about it. R = RED means you are really unsure and lack confidence; you might want to focus your revision here and possibly talk to your teacher for help A = AMBER means you are reasonably confident but need some extra practice G = GREEN means you are very confident. As your revision progresses, you can concentrate on the RED and AMBER items in order to turn them into GREEN items. You might find it helpful to highlight each topic in red, orange or green to help you prioritise.			You can use the Comments column to: • add more information about the details for each point • include a reference to a useful resource • add learning aids such as stories, articles or word play • highlight areas of difficulty or things that you need to talk to your teacher about.

Paper 1: Reading

Skills and Knowledge	Ways to practise skills	R	A	G	Comments
Reading Forms and styles	Read and understand the difference in forms and styles of writing which may appear in advertisements, brochures, leaflets, editorials, news stories, articles, reviews, blogs, investigative journalism, letters, podcasts, (auto)biographies, travel writing, diaries, essays, scripted speech, narrative writing, and descriptive writing.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading Linguistic elements and literary features	Identify and use the linguistic elements and literary features of texts including parts of speech/word classes, vocabulary, figurative language, phonology, morphology, rhetorical devices, voice, aspect, tense, modality, narrative perspective, word ordering and sentence structure, paragraph- and text-level structure, formality/informality of tone and pragmatics.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading Audience	Identify and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the significance of audience in both the design and reception of texts.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading Genre, purpose and context	Identify and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the ways in which genre, purpose and context contribute to the meaning of texts.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading Meaning	Analyse the ways in which linguistic elements come together in a text to create meaning.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Analysis	Write analytically about the effects produced by a range of linguistic elements and literary features.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading	Selecting and interpret words and phrases from a text with care and precision.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing	Integrate individual analytical points into a fluent, logically sequenced essay.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading Writing	Recognise and comment on the overall style of a text, and give examples of this through specific instances from the text.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing	Use quotations, evidence and evaluation, to produce precise, meaningful commentaries.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing	Use appropriate language to link quotations and evidence with explanatory comments.	☐	☐	☐	

Skills and Knowledge	Ways to practise skills	R	A	G	Comments
Writing	Integrate quotations and evidence into a cohesive argument.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading Writing	Write short, directed pieces in response to a text.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading Writing Style	Write in the same style as another text.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading Writing Style	Write in a different style from a text at the same time as re-using the content/ material.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading Writing	Compare the style and linguistic elements of your own writing with those of a given text.	☐	☐	☐	

Paper 2: Writing

Skills and Knowledge	Ways to practise skills	R	A	G	Comments
Writing Forms and styles	Write confidently in the following forms and styles: advertisements, brochures, leaflets, editorials, news stories, articles, reviews, blogs, investigative journalism, letters, podcasts, (auto)biographies, travel writing, diaries, essays, scripted speech, narrative writing, and descriptive writing.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading Writing Linguistic elements and literary features	Identify and use linguistic elements and literary features including parts of speech/word classes, vocabulary, figurative language, phonology, morphology, rhetorical devices, voice, aspect, tense, modality, narrative perspective, word ordering and sentence structure, paragraph- and text-level structure, formality/ informality of tone and pragmatics.	☐	☐	☐	
Reading Writing Audience	Show knowledge and understanding of the significance of audience in both the design and reception of texts.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Genre, purpose and context	Show knowledge and understanding of the ways in which genre, purpose and context contribute to the meaning of texts.	☐	☐	☐	

Skills and Knowledge	Ways to practise skills	R	A	G	Comments
Writing Audience and purpose	Write for a specified audience and purpose, to fulfil the brief provided.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Structure	Produce an appropriate structure for longer pieces of writing.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Structure	Use a structure such as Freytag's Pyramid in imaginative writing.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Discursive	Set up argument and counter-argument to structure discursive writing.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Review	Use introductory, summary and evaluative sections in review writing.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Literary purpose	Organising writing to achieve specific effects, such as withholding key information in imaginative writing to achieve tension and climax/anti-climax.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Criticism	Use evidentiary logic in critical writing Use evaluative lexis in critical writing.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Essay	Structure paragraphs, using topic sentences, connectives, internal coherence, discourse markers to form a fluent overall response.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Descriptive	Use imagery in descriptive writing.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Rhetoric	Use rhetorical devices in argumentative writing.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Expression	Express ideas accurately and clearly at both sentence and word level.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing Reflection and evaluation	Reflecting upon and evaluate the qualities of your own writing, including aspects relating to its purpose, form and audience.	☐	☐	☐	

Paper 3: Language Analysis

Skills and Knowledge	Ways to practise skills	R	A	G	Comments
Language change Linguistic frameworks	Identify and write about the timeline and essential features of the development of the English language from Early Modern English to Contemporary English, including graphology, orthography, phonology, morphology, syntax, lexis, semantics, pragmatics and grammar.	☐	☐	☐	
Language change Concepts and terminology	Identify and write about concepts and terminology related to language change, including etymology, derivation, inflection, telescoping, coalescence, acronym, conversion, compounding, backformation, blending, borrowing, amelioration, pejoration, broadening and narrowing.	☐	☐	☐	
Language change Theories and theorists	Identify and write about theories and theorists of language change, including random fluctuation theory, cultural transmission theory, theory of lexical gaps, substratum theory, functional theory, and tree and wave models.	☐	☐	☐	
Language change *n*-grams	Use and interpret data from n-gram graphs representing changes in language use over time, including comparisons of related words, parts of speech, inflections, collocations.	☐	☐	☐	
Language change Word tables	Use and interpret data from n-gram graphs representing changes in language use over time, including comparisons of related words, parts of speech, inflections, collocations.	☐	☐	☐	
Language change Word tables	Use and interpret data from word tables derived from corpus data including collocate lists and synonym lists.	☐	☐	☐	
Language change Research	Show that you have explored research in the field of language change	☐	☐	☐	
Language change Analysis	Analysing unseen texts as exemplars of certain aspects of language change.	☐	☐	☐	
Language change Theories and concepts	Contextualise your findings from unseen texts alongside relevant theories and concepts relating to language change.	☐	☐	☐	
Writing	Synthesise your responses to a range of language data into a coherent analytical essay.	☐	☐	☐	

Skills and Knowledge	Ways to practise skills	R	A	G	Comments
Child language acquisition Stages of acquisition	Identify and write about the main stages of early development in child language acquisition, including babbling, holophrastic, telegraphic and post telegraphic stages.	☐	☐	☐	
Child language acquisition Functions	Identify and write about the different functions of children's language, including instrumental, regulatory, interactional, personal, representational, heuristic and imaginative.	☐	☐	☐	
Child language acquisition Theories and theorists	Apply your knowledge and understanding of theories and theorists of child language acquisition, including imitation and reinforcement theory, language acquisition device, language acquisition support system, cognitive development theory, and child directed or caretaker speech.	☐	☐	☐	
Child language acquisition Transcription Analysis	Identify and interpret the conventions and features of unscripted conversation and spoken language transcripts, including notation for pauses, overlaps, stress, intonation and phonemic features.	☐	☐	☐	
Child language acquisition Research	Explore research in the field of child language.	☐	☐	☐	
Child language acquisition Analysis	Analyse spoken language transcripts as exemplars of certain aspects of child language acquisition.	☐	☐	☐	
Child language acquisition Analysis Theories Concepts Writing	Contextualise findings alongside relevant theories and concepts relating to child language acquisition.	☐	☐	☐	
Child language acquisition Theories Writing	Synthesise theoretical examples into a coherent analytical essay.	☐	☐	☐	

Paper 4: Language Topics

Skills and Knowledge	Ways to practise skills	R	A	G	Comments
English in the world Development	Show your knowledge and understanding of the historical development of English as a 'global' language, including colonialism, cultural influence and effects, concentric circles model, multilingualism, the future of English	☐	☐	☐	
English in the world Varieties	Identify and write about varieties of English, including standard and nonstandard 'Englishes', creolisation, sociolect continuum, and official and unofficial attitudes and policies.	☐	☐	☐	
English in the world Ethics	Identify and write about relevant ethical considerations, including language shift and death, cultural imperialism, equality of opportunity, and global cooperation.	☐	☐	☐	
English in the world Criticism	Read and demonstrate a critical understanding of unseen texts relating to 'English in the world'.	☐	☐	☐	
English in the world Analysis	Select and analyse relevant ideas and examples from the texts.	☐	☐	☐	
English in the world Theories and theorists	Relate ideas and examples to theories, theorists and studies from your wider study of the relevant topic area.	☐	☐	☐	
English in the world Writing	Synthesise your ideas and theoretical considerations into a coherent analytical essay.	☐	☐	☐	
Language and the self Innateness and learning	Identify and write about innateness and learning, including behaviourism, innatism, nativism and empiricism.	☐	☐	☐	
Language and the self Language and thought	Identify and write about the relationship between language and thought, including linguistic relativity and determinism, universalism, and the language of thought hypothesis.	☐	☐	☐	
Language and the self Language and social identity	Show your knowledge and understanding of the relationship between language and social identity, including speech communities, prestige, idiolect, dialect, sociolect, genderlect, variation, standard and nonstandard features, inclusion and exclusion, speech sounds and accents.	☐	☐	☐	
Language and the self Reading	Reading and demonstrate critical understanding of unseen texts relating to 'Language and the self'.	☐	☐	☐	

Skills and Knowledge	Ways to practise skills	R	A	G	Comments
Language and the self Analysis	Select and analyse relevant ideas and examples from the texts.	☐	☐	☐	
Language and the self Theories and theorists	Relate your ideas and examples to theories, theorists and studies from your wider research into Language and the self.	☐	☐	☐	
Language and the self Writing	Synthesise your considerations into a coherent analytical essay.	☐	☐	☐	

Section 7: Useful websites

The websites listed below are useful resources to help you study for your Cambridge International AS and A Level English Language.

Reading

http://www.studygs.net/fiction.htm

https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/aug/23/literary-fiction-readers-understand-others-emotions-better-study-finds

https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2018/07/18/six-ways-reading-fiction-makes-us-better-marketers/#4ad7281d63d3

Writing

https://www.dailywritingtips.com/creative-writing-101/

https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/writing-help/top-tips-for-creative-writing

https://www.dummies.com/education/language-arts/creative-writing/creative-writing-for-dummies-cheat-sheet/

Language Change

https://www.thehistoryofenglish.com/

https://www.englishclub.com/history-of-english/

https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/explore/the-history-of-english/

Child language acquisition

https://getrevising.co.uk/resources/child_language_acquisition_a_notes2

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_acquisition

https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/engb3-child-language-acquisition-notes-11272547

English in the world

https://www.linguisticsociety.org/

https://www.thehistoryofenglish.com/issues_global.html

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-12017753

https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/jul/27/english-language-global-dominance

Language and the self

https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/dreaming-freud/201411/how-much-does-the-language-we-speak-shape-our-identity

http://catalogue.pearsoned.co.uk/assets/hip/gb/uploads/M02_HALL5068_02_SE_C02.pdf

https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/language-and-identity-9780567566140/

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